

Message Text

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TAGS: MARR MASS PFOR KE US

SUBJECT: KENYA REQUESTS US MILITARY AID

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MARR MASS PFOR KE US

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SUBJECT: KENYA REQUESTS U.S. MILITARY AID

REF: NAIROBI 7372

BEGIN SUMMARY: KENYA HAS FOR FIRST TIME MADE FORMAL REQUEST FOR U.S. MILITARY CREDIT OR GRANT AID TO SUPPLEMENT (WHAT WILL PROBABLY BE MODEST) BRITISH MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND ENABLE KENYA TO COUNTER THREAT TO ITS SECURITY POSED BY HEAVILY ARMED AND INCREASINGLY HOSTILE NEIGHBORS. I BELIEVE THAT SIGNIFICANT U.S. INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE IN KENYA AND EASTERN AFRICA AND RECOMMEND THAT FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO KENYAN REQUESTS DESPITE CONGRESSIONAL RESTRICTIONS ON FMS CREDITS AND MAP.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN PAST COMMUNICATIONS WITH WASHINGTON I HAVE EXPRESSED MY CONCERN REGARDING ARMS RACE AND HENCE STABILITY IN EASTERN AFRICA. KENYANS HAVE NOW REITERATED AT A HIGHER LEVEL THAN PREVIOUSLY THEIR CONCERN OVER THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND, FOR FIRST TIME, HAVE FORMALLY REQUESTED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM U.S. FOR MILITARY PURPOSES. VICE PRESIDENT DANIEL ARAP MOI, ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM PRESIDENT KENYATTA, SUMMONED ME TO HIS OFFICE TODAY AND INFORMED ME OF KENYA'S DEEP CONCERN OVER HIGH LEVEL OF ARMAMENT AND HOSTILITY OF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. HE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL NJONJO, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT AT MEETING, STRESSED THAT MAJOR THREAT TO KENYA IS POSED BY SOMALIA AND EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT ONCE PRESIDENT SIAD CEASES TO BE CHAIRMAN OF OAU NEXT JUNE, SOMALIA GOVERNMENT WILL NO LONGER FEEL COMPELLED TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN PRESSING SOMALIA'S IRREDENTIST CLAIMS AGAINST KENYA. THEY ALSO MENTIONED AS REGIONAL THREATS UNPREDICTABILITY OF UGANDA'S GENERAL AMIN AND GROWING CHINESE INFLUENCE IN TANZANIA. PROBLEM COMPOUNDED BY FACT THAT ETHIOPIA, KENYA'S ONLY ALLY, IS NOW IN VERY "FLUID" SITUATION.

2. MOI EXPLAINED THAT FOREGOING SITUATION HAD LED KENYAN GOVERNMENT TO CONCLUDE RELUCTANTLY THAT KENYA MUST SPEND MORE ON ARMAMENT EVEN THOUGH RESOURCES MIGHT BE DIVERTED FROM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. MOI SAID THAT PRESIDENT KENYATTA HAD DECIDED TO APPROACH BOTH U.K. AND

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U.S. FOR NEEDED MILITARY ASSISTANCE. MOI CITED AS EXAMPLES OF U.S. HARDWARE KENYA INTERESTED IN OBTAINING: "SQUADRON" OF F-5E AIRCRAFT, POLICE HELICOPTERS AND UNSPECIFIED SMALLER ARMS WHICH WOULD SERVE AS "DETERRENTS" TO POSSIBLE ATTACK AGAINST KENYA. MAJOR PROBLEM IS FINANCING ACQUISITIONS. MOI SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED THAT U.S. PROVIDE EITHER LONG-TERM CREDIT AT LOW INTEREST RATES OR GRANT TO FINANCE PURCHASES OF U.S.

MILITARY EQUIPMENT, BUT DID NOT SPECIFY AMOUNT OF FINANCING DESIRED. HE EXPRESSED HOPE WE WOULD FIND IT IN OUR INTEREST TO ASSIST FELLOW FREE-WORLD COUNTRY, NOTING THAT U.S. NAVY FREQUENTLY UTILIZES PORT OF MOMBASA

AND THAT SOVIET UNION IS INCREASING ITS INFLUENCE IN EASTERN AFRICA.

3. I RESPONDED TO MOI'S REQUEST BY STATING THAT I AM SYMPATHETIC TO KENYA'S CONCERNS AND NEEDS AND SAID I WAS PLEASED THAT KENYA REGARDS U.S. AS A FRIEND. I MENTIONED RECENT PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION TO MAKE KENYA ELIGIBLE TO PURCHASE FMS MILITARY ITEMS ON CASH BASIS AS EXAMPLE OF OUR EFFORTS IN SECURITY AREA TO BE HELPFUL TO KENYA. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD KENYAN CONCERN FOR SECURITY AND STABILITY IN THIS PART OF WORLD AND SAID U.S. IS INTERESTED IN MAINTENANCE OF PEACE AND RECOGNIZES THAT BALANCE OF POWER IS NECESSARY ELEMENT.

4. I POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT U.S. CONGRESS PLAYS MAJOR ROLE IN DETERMINING HOW AND WHERE U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE CAN BE GIVEN. ITS MOOD AND ACTIONS PARTICULARLY SINCE VIETNAM, HAS TENDED TO BE AGAINST U.S. MILITARY AID IN GENERAL. SPECIFIC EXAMPLES ARE RECENT SHARP REDUCTIONS IN MILITARY AID TO CAMBODIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES. MOREOVER, THERE HAS BEEN A DOLS. 40 MILLION CEILING IMPOSED BY CONGRESS ON MILITARY CREDITS AND GRANTS FOR AFRICA WHICH, IN VIEW OF SUBSTANTIAL NEEDS OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES SUCH AS ETHIOPIA, IS VERY LOW. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES I TOLD MOI THAT I COULD NOT BE ENCOURAGING RE USG RESPONSE TO HIS REQUEST, BUT SAID THAT I WOULD TRANSMIT HIS REQUEST TO WASHINGTON AND GIVE HIM OUR RESPONSE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION

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I REMINDED HIM THAT U.S. HAS PROVIDED KENYA WITH OVER DOLS. 90 MILLION IN ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE SINCE INDEPENDENCE AND THAT USG LOOKS ON KENYA AS FRIEND IN THIS PART OF WORLD.

5. WHILE I REALIZE THAT PROVIDING MAP OR FMS CREDIT TO KENYA WOULD REPRESENT MAJOR U.S. POLICY DECISION, I WOULD HOPE THAT THIS QUESTION COULD BE GIVEN SERIOUS CONSIDERATION WITHIN USG. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT I RECOMMENDED LAST AUGUST (REFTEL) THAT PRIORITY CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO NSSM-TYPE STUDY OF CURRENT POLITICO-MILITARY SITUATION IN EASTERN AFRICA TO DETERMINE EXTENT TO WHICH U.S. INTERESTS AFFECTED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS AREA AND WHAT POLICIES WE MIGHT APPROPRIATELY PURSUE. SINCE THIS STUDY HAS APPARENTLY NOT BEEN COMPLETED, I AM TAKING LIB-

ERTY OF SETTING FORTH BRIEFLY IN FOLLOWING TWO PARAGRAPHS
MY PERSONAL EVALUATION OF U.S. INTERESTS IN KENYA AND
EASTERN AFRICA AS WELL AS MY RECOMMENDATION FOR USG
RESPONSE TO KENYAN REQUEST.

6. U.S. INTERESTS. I AM NOT ONLY FULLY COGNIZANT OF CONGRESS'S RELUCTANCE TO AUTHORIZE MILITARY AID, BUT BASICALLY AGREE. HOWEVER, I FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT TO U.S. INTERESTS IN NEAR AND LONGER TERM TO ASSIST STRONG (IN TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY) COUNTRIES IN AFRICA TO BECOME REGIONAL LEADERS AND THEREBY PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT AND STABILITY IN OTHER COUNTRIES. KENYA FALLS INTO THIS CATEGORY. U.S. INTEREST IN KENYA (BESIDES TRADE, INVESTMENT) IS DEFINITELY STRATEGIC. NOT ONLY IN TERMS OF INDIAN OCEAN AND CONTINUED U.S. NAVY ACCESS TO PORT OF MOMBASA, BUT AS STABILIZING INFLUENCE IN AREA OF GROWING UNREST WHICH IS INCREASINGLY COMING UNDER INFLUENCE OF SOVIET UNION AND CHINA. MOREOVER, KENYA AND NEARBY COUNTRIES ARE IMPORTANT SOURCE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES AND HAVE MINERAL POTENTIAL, INCLUDING SOME PROSPECTS FOR PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS. IT WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE IN U.S. INTEREST TO HAVE ACCESS TO THESE RESOURCES. NO WAR BETWEEN INDEPENDENT BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAS YET TAKEN PLACE, BUT AREA OF GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR SUCH IS EASTERN AFRICA. TURMOIL IN ETHIOPIA HAS, IN KENYAN VIEW, ELIMINATED ETHIOPIA-KENYA MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT AS

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INSURANCE POLICY AGAINST SOMALIA MILITARY ATTACK. REDRESSMENT OF KENYA'S CURRENTLY INFERIOR MILITARY POSITION VIS-A-VIS ITS NEIGHBORS COULD PREVENT OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES. LIGHTLY ARMED KENYA (ONLY 6,400 IN ARMED FORCES, NO SUPERSONIC JETS, NO TANKS) WOULD AT PRESENT HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF COUNTERING SOMALI INVASION OF NORTHEAST, PARTICULARLY IF THERE WERE A COORDINATED ATTACK ON KENYA BY UGANDA. WHILE I BELIEVE SUCH A SCENARIO IS RELATIVELY REMOTE AT MOMENT, IT IS FAR FROM IMPOSSIBLE OR IMPROBABLE.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS. I RECOMMEND THAT USG OFFER FMS CREDIT OR MAP TO FINANCE MODERATE PROCUREMENT OF US ARMS AND TRAINING BY GOK. (WE UNDERSTAND BRITISH UNWILLING PROVIDE MORE THAN MODEST CREDITS WHICH WOULD BE ON REGULAR ECGD TERMS.) IN ADDITION I RECOMMEND THAT CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN BY USG TO USING ITS INFLUENCE WITH IRAN TO BRING KENYA AND IRAN CLOSER TOGETHER MILITARILY. SUCH COOPERATION COULD CONCEIVABLY TAKE FORM OF IRANIAN FINANCING OF KENYAN ACQUISITIONS OF U.S. ARMS, IRANIAN GIFTS OR LOANS TO KENYA OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT NOT NEEDED IN IRAN, AND EVEN EVENTUALLY SOME TYPE OF MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT

WHICH MIGHT MAKE KENYA FEEL LESS THREATENED BY
HOSTILE NEIGHBORS.

8. I WOULD APPRECIATE INSTRUCTIONS FOR AT LEAST INTERIM
REPLY TO VICE PRESIDENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AS MOI

EMPHASIZED HIGH PRIORITY GOK ATTACHES TO STRENGTHENING
OF KENYAN ARMED FORCES DUE TO THEIR FEARS THAT SOMALI
PRESIDENT SIAD WILL BE LESS INCLINED TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT
ONCE HE GIVES UP CHAIRMANSHIP OF OAU NEXT JUNE. MARSHALL
UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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